

FILED

APR 08 2014

N.J. BOARD OF NURSING

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
NEW JERSEY STATE
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE	:	
LICENSE OF	:	
	:	Administrative Action
VALERIE EDWARDS, L.P.N.	:	
License # 26NP05612100	:	
	:	FINAL ORDER
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	OF DISCIPLINE
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	
	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("the Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent is a licensed practical nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto.
2. On or about June 6, 2013, the Board sent an inquiry to respondent concerning a flagging notice the Board had received indicating that respondent had been arrested on May 31, 2013, for possession of marijuana and paraphernalia and other drug-related charges. The Board's letter of inquiry asked respondent to submit certain information and documents, including

certificates of completion for all continuing education completed within the last three years.

3. The inquiry was sent by certified and regular mail to respondent's address of record. The certified mailing was signed for. The regular mailing was not returned. No response has been received to date.

4. On her renewal application submitted on May 20, 2012, respondent indicated that she would have completed all required continuing education for the June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012 renewal period by May 31, 2012.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Respondent's failure to respond to the Board inquiry concerning her arrest constitutes a failure to cooperate with a Board investigation in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.2 and 1.3.

Respondent's failure to document timely completion of the required thirty contact hours of continuing education for the June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012, renewal period constitutes a violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3.

Respondent's indication on her 2012 renewal application that she would have timely completed all required continuing education for the June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012 renewal cycle constitutes misrepresentation in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).

DISCUSSION

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline imposing a civil penalty, reprimand, and suspending Respondent's license to practice as a licensed practical nurse in the State of New Jersey was entered on December 23, 2013. A copy was served on Respondent. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the 30th business day following entry unless Respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated Findings of Fact or Conclusions of Law by submitting a written request for modification or dismissal setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting Respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

In response to the Provisional Order of Discipline, Respondent maintained that she had originally responded to the Board's letter of inquiry by faxing a letter dated June 19, 2013. Respondent provided a copy of her original response, along with another letter and updated information, including documentation of completing thirty hours of continuing education in February 2014. Respondent resubmitted all information which had been requested in the inquiry letter dated June 6, 2013.

The Board reviewed Respondent's submissions and determined that further proceedings were not necessary. As to Respondent's duty to cooperate with a Board investigation, the Board gave Respondent the benefit of the doubt and determined that imposition of the five hundred dollar (\$500) civil penalty for failure to cooperate was not justified. However, as Respondent did not timely complete her continuing education requirement during the required time period and indicated on her renewal that she had, the Board found imposition of the two hundred and fifty dollar (\$250) civil penalty and reprimand justified. Suspension is no longer warranted as Respondent has provided all the information requested in the Board's letter of inquiry and has taken make-up classes to cure the deficiency in her continuing education for the June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012 biennial period.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 8th day of Apr., 2014,

ORDERED that:

1. A public reprimand is hereby imposed for the violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).

2. A civil penalty of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) for failure to timely complete continuing education is hereby imposed. Payment shall be in the form of a certified check or money order, made payable to the State of New Jersey, and forwarded to the attention of George Hebert, Executive

Director, Board of Nursing, P.O. Box 45010, 124 Halsey Street,
6th Floor, Newark, NJ 07101, within fifteen days of the filing of
this Final Order of Discipline. In the event Respondent fails
to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed
in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such
other proceedings as authorized by law.

3. Continuing education completed after May 31, 2012 and
applied to cure the deficiency of a previous biennial period
(make-up classes) shall not be used to satisfy the requirements
of the current biennial period. Respondent shall complete an
additional thirty hours of continuing education before May 31,
2014 to satisfy the requirements of the current biennial period
of June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

Patricia Murphy Ph.D. APRN, FAAN

By: _____
Patricia Ann Murphy, PhD, APN
Board President